

Queen's

ALUMNI REVIEW

Issue 2, 2018

The magazine of
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario
queensu.ca/alumnireview

Omar El Akkad's
American War

The Battle of Hill 70

War & Peace



letters

TO THE EDITOR

Remembering the 1998 ice storm

We ran this photo from the 1998 ice storm in Kingston in our last issue. A Kingston Whig-Standard photo in the Queen's Archives, this photo was picked up by media across Canada at the time. However, we didn't know who was in the photo. Now, thanks to **Kathryn Derby**, Arts'64, Ed'77, we do: it's her son, **Michael Braby**, Artsci'91. Michael was snapped on Nelson Street as he was checking on his tenants in the storm's aftermath.

My spouse, **Robert Luke** (MA'97 [English]) and I had our first date (a whole string of them really) during the ice storm. A week of cancelled classes provided plenty of time for long walks and romantic makeshift dinners by candlelight. The ice storm's strange, brief respite from "normal" life gave us the space to imagine a future together. Twenty years later we look back on that time as magical, a bit surreal – and the beginning of a lifelong shared adventure.

Sandra Neill, MA'98 (English)
Toronto



QUEEN'S ARCHIVES ICE STORM '98 FONDS, KINGSTON WHIG-STANDARD PHOTO

Looking back on the ice storm, I distinctly remember two things: shooting a couple of rolls of film to document the storm, and looking for some of my fellow history grad students in An Clachan when



Memorable waterfront views.
Award winning culinary team.
Private and semi-private function rooms.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
when planning a small meeting, reception or dinner.



1 Johnson Street, Kingston
613.549.6243
aquaterrakingston.com



their power went out. These were the days before cell phones; there was no way to reach anyone once they were not home.

What turned out to be interesting about the photos is that a year later, while living in Calgary, I had scanned my shots and put them on a web page hosted by my ISP. In the early days of search engines, my shots were found by a couple of magazines, an ad agency, and a publisher putting together a geography encyclopedia; I licensed several shots for publication.

It has taken me until the last two years to pursue photography as a career change choice, but I'm doing that and thinking fondly of the way the urge to document the storm turned into paying photo work. These days my work can be seen at www.g-3.ca.

Robert Pearson, MA'99 (History)
Pointe-Claire, Que.

Here's a look at my experience from the 1998 ice storm. I had an eating disorder throughout my time at Queen's. And yet those four years in Kingston are full of happy memories.

Even during the infamous ice storm that swept across Ontario and turned Kingston into a ghost town, I'd venture back to my student house to exercise while it was light. On my way there was never a soul in sight. The army had come in, issued a state of emergency, and ushered everyone out. But I stayed at a friend's apartment above a shop on the north side of Princess Street, on the only string of buildings that had power for miles around. A group of us found each other, and short-term shelter turned into a seven-day sleepover. We all had Jody in common. Her front room became a patchwork of pillows and blankets stripped from each of our beds. Poor Oscar, her cat, spent much of the week sitting on top of an opened door, shocked by the state of his Kingston.

Each morning I'd cautiously slide across campus toward my abandoned street. Every surface was encased in ice. The world felt quiet and still and void of anything living. I'd climb over huge, century-old trees that criss-crossed the roads and walkways (unknowingly awaiting wood chippers) to get back to my trusty NordicTrack. Gripping the handles, my arms and legs raced on the spot and I'd see my breath in the air. It was the closest I got to outdoor skiing. Then I'd have a cold shower and my hair would freeze as I headed back through the deserted student ghetto, to rejoin the slumber party. By the end of that week my cheeks hurt from laughing. And I had new respect for Mother Nature.

Saying goodbye felt like the end of the movie *Stand By Me*. We'd really been through something together. We said we'd stay in touch. Then we

joked about bumping into each other 20 years later and how the ice storm would still be our big story. Then we went our separate ways.

What I want you to know is the ice did melt. The roads were cleared. Campus slowly came back to life and I eventually got healthy. No matter what you're going through, hold on and keep your chin up. Good or bad, nothing lasts forever. And all the meaningful memories stay with you.

Many thanks to Queen's Student Health Services, in particular Dr. McNevin, for helping me get back on track.

Kelly Clark, Artsci'98
Toronto

Kelly Clark runs a blog about healthy eating: the10principles.com.



Bing Wang captured the beauty of the ice storm aftermath at the corner of Union Street and University Avenue.

BING WANG

During the school year of 1997–98, I lived in a nine-bedroom apartment in Princess Towers on Princess Street. It was one of very few areas in the city that didn't lose power at all during the ice storm in 1998. At that time, I was a physics graduate student. Stirling Hall, where the physics department was located, also had power (probably from its own power generator). The department of course was closed when all classes were cancelled across the campus. However, as graduate students, we still had access to Stirling Hall. I therefore was able to work in the department during those days. A few graduate students, who did not have power at their houses, slept on the floor of undergraduate labs. The washroom in the basement of the building had shower facilities, and so they were able to take showers. The biggest theatre in the building for large lectures and classes had a VCR and a drop-down screen. So those graduate students could also watch movies there at night. It was my first ice storm experience. Although it caused serious damages, the aftermath effect could look pretty through a camera lens.

Bing Wang, MSc'98, PHD'03 (Physics)
Markham